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Chairperson: Ms. Intelmann ..... (Estonia)

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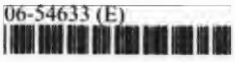

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Statement by the Chairperson

1. **The Chairperson** said that although the United Nations had made significant strides in its reform efforts during 2005, it would need to accomplish considerably more to deliver on the agenda agreed at the 2005 World Summit. The challenge given to the Committee at the Summit was to devote as much energy as possible to implementing the global partnership for development within the agreed time frame and the Committee must live up to it. The overarching focus of its work would therefore be globalization and development.

2. The current unprecedented scale and pace of global interdependence posed a challenge for policymakers and institutions to ensure that globalization became a positive force for all. Certain critical global challenges of globalization, such as poverty eradication and migration, required political leaders from both developing and developed countries to accelerate and expand their cooperation.

3. The failure of trade talks in the Doha Development Round illustrated the difficulty of managing globalization. The Committee must redouble its efforts in the quest to relaunch that process, for the loss of a major opportunity to integrate more vulnerable economies into international trade could undermine their potential for development.

4. There were several other issues that required the Committee's special attention. Its deliberations on financing for development offered an important opportunity to prepare the five-year review of the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, which the Government of Qatar had offered to host. In the area of migration, the Committee had an opportunity to follow up on the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development. In the area of globalization, the Committee might consider specific measures to bridge the growing gulf in technological and scientific capabilities between countries and regions. In the area of sustainable development, the Committee would have an opportunity to address energy questions.

5. During the sixty-first session, the Committee should redouble its efforts to improve its working methods. The World Summit had reformed the Economic and Social Council, which had been charged with monitoring and advancing implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and the other agreed development goals. The Summit had also emphasized the need for coherence and integration in the economic and social areas, and the need to avoid duplication in the consideration of various agenda items.

6. It might be possible to streamline the reporting of the Second and Third Committees. Some items, like poverty eradication and globalization, required joint consideration by the two committees, and development was a multidimensional issue, which required a holistic approach. Greater effort was also needed to translate the Second Committee's legislation into effective action through national action plans and strategies, and the Committee should consider how to integrate its work with the new functions of the Economic and Social Council, which focused on implementation.

Statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs

7. **Mr. Ocampo** (Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs) said that the Committee's programme of work for the sixty-first session covered a wide range of critical issues on the United Nations development agenda. The Committee would address the overarching goal of poverty eradication, notably by convening the International Forum on the Eradication of Poverty. It would continue to discuss the related issue of microcredit, and devote attention to sustainable development issues.

8. The Committee would also decide on the offer by the Government of Qatar to host a follow-up international conference on financing for development. The Monterrey Consensus had defined a new approach to development cooperation as a partnership between developing and developed areas and had accelerated actions in many areas. It was crucial that the follow-up to the Monterrey Conference be given careful attention.

9. With respect to the world economic outlook, he said that the world economy was expected to grow at a robust rate of 3.6 per cent in 2006, much as it had in 2005. Some deceleration in growth was likely in 2007, with the 2007 growth rate currently estimated at 3 per cent. However, a number of downside risks could lower that projection even further. First, the decline in the housing market was a real threat in a number of countries, especially in the United States of America,

and could have strong ripple effects in the near future. A sharp fall in housing prices in the United States economy could trigger a disorderly adjustment of global imbalances.

10. Second, the outlook for oil prices and its possible impact on global growth remained uncertain. Thus far, much of the increase in oil prices had been due to stronger-than-expected growth in the global demand for oil, coinciding with a tight capacity for oil production and refining, and exacerbated by natural disasters and geopolitical concerns. In the short term, and despite the recent fall in prices, worries about supply shocks were likely to dominate market movements.

11. However, unlike the two previous periods of high oil prices, during the 1970s and 1980s, current higher oil prices had thus far had no major recessionary effects. That was because the rise in oil prices had been demand-driven. However, a supply-side disruption would have unprecedented consequences. It was therefore crucial to increase investments in order to safeguard the world economy against any disruption in oil supply. Meanwhile, the recent substantially heightened volatility in oil prices, as well as in the prices of a number of other primary commodities, should be a vivid reminder for many commodity-exporting developing countries that their economic growth remained vulnerable to the vicissitudes of commodity prices.

12. Third, and perhaps most important, widening global imbalances, and particularly the external deficit of the United States, continued to pose a major risk. Paradoxically, the deteriorating United States deficit had been accompanied, in many developing countries, by the strengthening of the external sector and reduced debt ratios. However, the longer the imbalances were allowed to develop, and the deeper they became, the higher the risk of a sudden and large devaluation of the United States dollar. Such an adjustment would have a significant depressive effect on the world economy as a whole, with an asymmetrically large impact on developing countries.

13. In order to maintain solid, broad-based, and stable world economic growth, the international community should urgently pursue more proactive policies to redress global imbalances. The United Nations had called for the involvement of a much broader range of countries in such coordination efforts than the current limited-membership forums, such as the Group of Eight, allowed for. He therefore welcomed the initiatives taken by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in that area. Such coordinated global adjustment would require measures to stimulate savings in the deficit countries and greater domestic demand in the surplus countries.

14. With respect to globalization, he said that despite the scale and pace of the current process of globalization, further progress in global economic integration should not be taken for granted. An important challenge for policymakers was to ensure that the benefits of global economic integration were widely shared. As shown in the *2006 World Economic and Social Survey*, the world had witnessed a process of "dual divergence" over the past quarter of a century, with an increasing income gap between developed and developing countries being paralleled by growth divergence among developing countries. The Survey had yielded major findings about the role that the international environment and domestic policies played in explaining that divergence.

15. At the domestic level, the Survey examined the role played by countries' patterns of specialization, their limited capacities to smooth business cycles through counter-cyclical macroeconomic capacities, and their institutional reforms. It underscored that institutional reforms encompassed more than creating markets and guaranteeing property rights, and that "big bangs" in institutional reform might generate more harm than good, whereas gradual institutional change could have a very positive impact on growth.

16. However, the growth of individual developing countries depended not only on domestic economic policies, but also on regional and global developments. During the period from 1950 to 1973, most developing countries had experienced rapid economic growth, but during the final 20 years of the twentieth century, only a few developing countries had been able to sustain rapid growth. Most had experienced strong growth over the past three years, but such growth could not be taken for granted. The suspension of the Doha Development Round represented one of the year's major setbacks in that context, but there were some encouraging signs that negotiations could be resumed in the near future.

17. A related challenge was the growing technology gap that hindered the ability of many countries to

benefit fully from the global economy. He hoped that the Committee would engage in a thorough discussion on the fuller use of science and technology to achieve the internationally agreed development goals. Countries should actively develop innovation systems and a sound scientific basis for them, including the associated investments in both human talent and infrastructure.

18. At the international level, global rules governing intellectual property rights must be flexible in order to guarantee adequate transfer of technology to developing countries. A positive role could also be played by the renewed Commission on Science and Technology for Development and the intergovernmental follow-up process to the World Summit on the Information Society agreed to by the Economic and Social Council during the summer, as well as the launch of the Global Alliance for ICT and Development (GAID).

19. The least developed countries were most adversely affected by trends in global disparities. The General Assembly High-level Meeting on the Midterm Comprehensive Global Review of the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010, held in September 2006, had reviewed the economic performance of those countries, as a group, since the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Brussels in 2001. The High-level Meeting had stressed that despite high growth levels since 2001, the group still faced the key challenge of ensuring that economic growth contributed to poverty reduction. The least developed countries should continue to improve governance, including by building human and institutional capacities, and to give greater attention to gender equality, agriculture, infrastructure and HIV/AIDS. Development partners, including other developing countries, should continue to increase their support to the least developed countries in the areas of official debt assistance (ODA), debt reduction and market access.

20. International migration was an area that had received less attention in global debates. However, the General Assembly's recent High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development had shown that migration could be debated constructively at the United Nations, and had recognized that international migration was a growing phenomenon and a key component of globalization with the potential to contribute positively to development. Broad support had been expressed for the Secretary-General's proposal to establish an informal, voluntary and consultative forum that would enable member States to continue discussing the best ideas and strategies to address migration issues.

21. All the aforementioned issues pointed more than ever to the need for effective and robust multilateralism, policy coherence and partnerships. The United Nations development agenda was founded on a set of well-defined goals and objectives — the eight Millennium Development Goals — with the overarching aim of cutting extreme poverty in half by 2015. In the follow-up to the World Summit, the primary goal for the entire United Nations development system was to ready itself to implement that agenda.

22. The adoption of resolution 60/265 on the follow-up to the development outcome of the Summit was an important step. The resolution had the potential to serve as another instrument for ensuring that the United Nations played a fundamental role in promoting and facilitating international cooperation for development, and the Committee had a pivotal role to play in the follow-up process. It was his hope that the consultations on the Economic and Social Council would be completed soon, and also lead to the adoption of a resolution on reform of the Council.

23. The two resolutions together would serve as guideposts for efforts to accelerate implementation. Key new functions assigned to the Council — the annual ministerial reviews and the biennial Development Cooperation Forum — must make strong starts. Traditionally, the issues on the Committee's agenda and the Council's agenda had been considered separately. In response to the Summit Outcome, it might be wise to find ways to bring them together. The recurrence of certain topics in certain intergovernmental forums illustrated their importance, and in that context he looked forward to the report of the High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment, which would initiate further discussion of ways to increase system-wide coherence in those areas.

24. The task of scaling up efforts to implement the United Nations development agenda had never been more crucial. If the Millennium Development Goals were to be met by 2015 and the United Nations development agenda was to be fully realized, those

goals must be pursued in an energetic and integrated manner. The World Summit had provided new instruments, but member States must work collectively and intensively to make that approach a reality.

25. **Mr. Lorenzo** (Dominican Republic) recalled that, during a visit to his country in August 2006, the Secretary-General had talked about how far many developing countries were from achieving the Millennium Development Goals. However, if developing countries were to achieve the Goals, they would need rapid economic growth, basic infrastructures, a solution to the energy crisis, employment recovery, greater progress in the use of information and communication technology (ICT) and a renewed global commitment to agriculture in the rural economies of poor countries.

26. Trade was vital as an engine of growth, and developing countries would not achieve the necessary economic growth to achieve the Goals without a timely and satisfactory outcome of the Doha negotiations. He therefore wondered how great was the challenge posed for economic growth by the uncertainty surrounding the high level of oil prices and the vulnerability of the Caribbean and many other countries to other disasters. The Under-Secretary-General had in the past expressed the hope that, through cooperation, oil-producing and oil-consuming countries would be able to manage the situation, but there had been no evidence of that so far. He therefore wondered whether there was an urgent need for an oil summit.

27. **Mr. Ocampo** (Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs) replied that the United Nations and several other international organizations had on many occasions underscored the impact of higher oil prices and natural disasters on many developing countries. It was quite clear that high oil prices had very different effects — sometimes positive, sometimes negative — on different developing and transition economies.

28. However, it was possible to meet certain common demands, notably through international cooperation to reduce the volatility in oil prices. It was, of course, hard to agree on market price trends, which were determined by a complex set of factors affecting both demand and supply. Over the past several weeks, oil prices had fallen significantly from their peak levels, but there had been very high volatility for the past two or three years.

29. If such cooperation was to work, it would need to be maintained in periods of high and low oil prices. Although it was certainly very important to take into consideration the situation of oil-importing countries, there had been times in the recent past when oil prices were low. For his part, he heard significant interest in cooperation from both oil-importing and oil-exporting countries. Moreover, many financial institutions, in particular, had already expressed their willingness to cooperate on problems caused by high oil prices, but such cooperation would take place within the normal channels.

30. **Mr. Atiyanto** (Indonesia) welcomed the emphasis placed by the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs on the need to address the issue of poverty, and hoped that it would provide a focus for the Committee's work during the current session. He wished to know his views on the quick-impact initiatives called for in the Summit Outcome.

31. **Mr. Ocampo** (Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs) replied that discussions would continue to focus on the eradication of poverty, particularly in parts of the world where little progress had been achieved. With respect to the quick-impact initiatives, several public and private agencies had begun to participate and action had already been taken in areas such as the distribution of anti-malaria bed nets. It was important to continue to identify initiatives where significant gains could be made in a short period of time.

32. **Mr. Edrees** (Egypt) said that his delegation wished to receive further information regarding the resumption of the Doha Round and the Global Alliance for ICT and Development.

33. **Mr. Ocampo** (Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs) replied that he was "cautiously optimistic" regarding the resumption of the talks. It was encouraging that certain countries, including the United States, had taken steps to begin new negotiations. The Global Alliance for ICT and Development were developing pilot initiatives in the areas of education, health and governance in the hope that they would encourage further action by stakeholders.

General debate

34. **Mr. Kumalo** (South Africa), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that full implementation of the outcomes of the major economic and social conferences and summits had yet to be achieved and that the economic development gap between developed and developing countries was still increasing. Clearly, globalization had yet to deliver the poor from dehumanizing poverty and hunger.

35. The Group of 77 and China attached great importance to the three pillars of sustainable development and the need to address them in an integrated manner. To achieve the eradication of poverty, it was necessary to find ways to change unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, with the developed countries taking the lead, and to protect and manage the natural resource base of economic and social development.

36. The international community must fully implement the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building by meeting the needs of developing countries for advanced and appropriate technologies, financial resources, education and training, capacity-building and the promotion of human resources.

37. With respect to migration and development, it would be important to pursue the dialogue launched at the recent High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, and to develop an international follow-up mechanism, based on the principle of partnership, to enhance the positive impact of migration and reduce its negative impact.

38. The development follow-up resolution had stressed the need for the United Nations to play a fundamental role in the promotion of international cooperation for development and the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (General Assembly resolution 60/265, para. 2). The United Nations needed to show unequivocal political will in that regard and not simply pay perfunctory service to the implementation of an equitable and balanced financial, economic and social global order. For its part, the Group of 77 and China remained committed to stressing the need for concrete actions by developed countries to implement all the commitments on trade, agricultural subsidies and the transfer of vital resources to developing countries.

39. **Mr. Rosengren** (Finland), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the acceding countries Bulgaria and Romania, the candidate countries Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey, the stabilization and association process countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, and, in addition, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that the European Union was implementing various initiatives to develop innovative resources for the financing of development and that it would also monitor and implement its commitments regarding aid effectiveness in all developing countries, in accordance with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness: Harmonization, Alignment, Results and Mutual Accountability. While donor coordination and alignment to recipient country systems were important factors, it was also essential for developing countries to create an enabling domestic environment; develop sound policies to strengthen good governance; and monitor and implement their commitments on aid effectiveness. Multilateral institutions also needed to continue their efforts to make aid more effective.

40. The European Union welcomed the implementation of the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative according to a strict timetable and the current discussions on strengthening the debt sustainability framework. It urged all donors and recipients to translate their political commitments into legally binding financial commitments.

41. The European Union remained fully committed to the Doha Development Agenda and hoped that negotiations would soon be resumed. It strongly supported the Aid for Trade Initiative and was already implementing duty-free and quota-free access for all goods, with the exception of arms, originating from the least developed countries.

42. The European Union supported joint international efforts to implement the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. It was vital to protect the natural resource base; achieve sustainable patterns of consumption and production; and safeguard the environment. The United Nations needed to respond to the immediate challenges of protecting the environment and to ensure sustainable living conditions for future generations. In that regard, the European Union called for an early resumption of the discussion on environmental governance within the framework of the General Assembly.

43. Although major improvements had recently been made in the area of humanitarian assistance, more needed to be done to save lives. Key issues included ensuring sustained and unhindered access to humanitarian personnel; improving coordination efforts; and creating flexible emergency funding.

44. The European Union attached great importance to the ICT-for-development agenda and continued to rely on the United Nations system for the coordination of its implementation, and for the system-wide follow-up of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society.

45. Lastly, the European Union remained committed to strengthening the work of the Second Committee and improving its work methods. It was important to continue the rationalization of the agenda of the Second Committee, including through further clustering of items and sub-items, and to produce fewer but more focused reports and resolutions. It was to be hoped that the work of the Second Committee would be taken into account in efforts to reform the divisions of labour between the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

46. **Mr. Miller** (United States of America) said that the greatest economic change of the last two decades had been the liberalization of international trade and the phenomenon known as globalization. Countries such as South Africa, China, Mexico and the United States had embraced globalization and had used it to create economic opportunities and greater prosperity for their citizens.

47. Unfortunately, not all countries had embraced political or economic change and it was discouraging to note what little impact the Second Committee had had on the great economic and social changes that occurred at the end of the twentieth century. The Committee clearly needed to analyse the factors of development and economic growth more carefully. Clearly, countries that opened their markets, promoted entrepreneurship and gave their citizens greater control over their lives and work enjoyed greater economic growth and prosperity.

48. Another important debate centred on the role of the nation state in economic activity. Individual liberty was being encroached on not only by States but also by international authorities that placed themselves above States. Current international institutions were being governed by the votes of countries rather than people; yet, such a system lacked even the most basic essential of democratic legitimacy: one person/one vote decision-making.

49. If countries did not comprehend the principles of basic governance, there was little chance that development would occur. Perhaps the Second Committee's most important contribution would be to discuss job creation and other ways to empower citizens to improve their standard of living. In that regard, nothing was more important than creating a regulatory environment in which entrepreneurs could flourish. According to the World Bank, barriers to business formation included weak property rights and contract enforcement, expensive licensing and compliance costs, and prolonged and costly bankruptcy procedures. It was important to remember that those barriers fell especially hard on the many women entrepreneurs in the informal economies of developing countries. The United Nations could play a role by helping governments break down barriers to business formation and simplify their regulatory systems in order to create a healthier climate for private sector development.

50. Finally, it should be recognized that, while official donor assistance was an appropriate and useful spur to economic development, it was more useful to focus on issues such as obstacles to business formation, growth and competition. Weak property rights kept businesses in the informal sector; informality impeded business growth, hindered rule of law and impeded competition. If the Second Committee wished to help eradicate poverty and expand the circle of prosperity, it needed to concentrate on issues of practical significance that could make a real difference.

51. **Mr. Akram** (Pakistan) welcomed the fact that, despite great odds, the world economy had experienced continued growth, attributable to high rates of consumption, investment in competitive manufacturing, the significant rise in liquidity generated by trade surpluses, and innovative financial instruments. However, the threat that macroeconomic imbalances could provoke a global meltdown could not be excluded. In the long term, the greatest danger was the marginalization and exclusion of the majority of the world population from the circle of prosperity created by globalization. Many countries were steeped in poverty and lacked productive capacity, and their situation was exacerbated by political turbulence and poor governance.

52. Ideally, the United Nations should participate in the coherent and comprehensive governance of the international economy, as it had already contributed to the promotion of the concept that equity should be addressed alongside considerations pertaining to efficiency and growth. The goals adopted by major United Nations conferences and summits during the previous decade had outlined policy and operational measures for spreading prosperity worldwide. The hopes of developing countries to focus attention on their priorities had been thwarted in recent years. The development focus of the 2005 World Summit had been sidelined by the security agenda of the major powers; indeed the World Summit Outcome contained only a few new or firm commitments to advance development goals. In areas such as trade and investment, certain formulations actually represented a regression from past commitments.

53. Although implementation of the internationally agreed goals had been highlighted on the 2006 development agenda, there have been assertions that the United Nations did not play a direct role in the implementation of Summit decisions. Political divergence in that regard was manifested in the protracted negotiation of the follow-up resolution on development, and in the failure to adopt a resolution on the revitalization of the Economic and Social Council. Pakistan believed that the central provision of the follow-up resolution was the monitoring of implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and the internationally agreed development goals and attached special importance to the recommendations of the Statistical Commission to develop specific indicators to assess progress in such implementation. A comprehensive matrix should be developed as a tool to assess actions taken, and for progress to be charted on an annual basis. Appropriate policy recommendations could then be formulated, under the annual ministerial review of the Economic and Social Council, on the basis of conclusions drawn by a monitoring mechanism.

54. It was essential to streamline and strengthen the development cooperation machinery of the United Nations system at the national, regional and global levels, since the Organization's development support role could prove meaningful if it were pursued in a coherent and coordinated manner.

55. The year 2007 should be marked by firm action to establish national development strategies and commitments of the international community to support those strategies. The focus should remain on key development objectives with a view to ending poverty and underdevelopment in the majority of developing countries.

56. At the national level, it was essential to promote policies and programmes that ensured macroeconomic stability, investments in human resources, infrastructure and production capacity, export orientation and good governance. Domestic resources for development could be mobilized through a number of measures, including better tax administration and granting property titles to the poor; appropriate incentives should be provided for the promotion of such policies. While he agreed with many of the comments made by the representative of the United States, he wished to add that the barriers to development were wider in scope and more pervasive than the barriers to business.

57. The value of regional integration had been well recognized and should be actively encouraged in order to promote economic growth, peace and stability. At the global level five vital goals should be pursued simultaneously: adequate financing for development; the revival and conclusion of the Doha Round; increased access to technology; the adoption of sustainable development as a central policy for advanced and developing countries; and agreement on approaches to the issue of migration and development.

58. The topic of equitable international economic governance could no longer be avoided. Rich countries could not continue to determine the policies and parameters of global finance, or monetary and trade policies that had a significant impact on the destiny of the poorest countries. Pakistan believed strongly in the role of the United Nations in global economic governance. Since the 2005 Summit represented a lost opportunity for development, he suggested that new timetables should be established to accelerate the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed goals. A United Nations summit devoted exclusively to development should be held in 2010.

59. **Mr. Churkin** (Russian Federation) said that the Committee's focus during the current session on the implementation of the decisions adopted by the 2005 World Summit had also guided the Russian Federation during its current presidency of the Group of Eight

(G-8). The discussions held recently on the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development and the High-level Meeting on the Least Developed Countries had not only been substantive, but had also identified common approaches and the main areas of activity for resolving pressing international problems.

60. Turning to macroeconomic questions, he said that the Russian Federation attached great importance to ensuring stable and predictable development financing. The prevailing social and economic situation in many developing countries, combined with the new challenges of globalization, called for decisive measures. As the Russian Federation made economic and social progress, it was already the largest donor to the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative in terms of GDP and the third highest in terms of debt cancellation for the least developed countries. His Government recognized that an increase in the volume of aid was not a panacea, but that the quality and efficiency of assistance should also be improved in order to establish a stable and predictable system of delivering assistance. It was vital to focus on domestic sources of growth and the mobilization of resources, the creation of a favourable climate for investment, good governance, transparency and the fight against corruption.

61. Regrettably, the value of international trade as a key factor of economic growth and development, and efforts to establish a fairer basis for trade had been undermined by the suspension of the Doha Round and a renewed trend towards protectionism. In that context, he expressed concern at the delays in the process of Russia's accession to the World Trade Organization, owing in part to the excessive demands placed on it, and stressed that, until certain economic reforms had been completed, his Government would deem it necessary to maintain measured protection of specific industries of vital importance to the economy, in accordance with World Trade Organization rules.

62. Environmental and sustainable development issues should be considered in a pragmatic manner to stimulate practical measures for the implementation of globally agreed goals and targets. Russia believed that special attention should be paid to climate change, deforestation, biodiversity, and the development of human settlements. The results of recent sessions of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) and the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) were hopeful. The Second Committee should provide clear political guidance to facilitate further progress.

63. He reiterated his delegation's commitment to the Committee's humanitarian agenda, and endorsed the Economic and Social Council recommendation concerning the transfer of humanitarian resolutions to the plenary sessions of the General Assembly, in the belief that it would ensure a more focused and meaningful discussion of the coordination of humanitarian assistance. The review of country-specific situations should serve as a basis for further improvements in that regard.

64. The Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review (TCPR) of operational activities for development should be the main platform for reviewing all proposals on reforms, including those emanating from the work of the High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment.

65. **Mr. Jenie** (Indonesia), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) said that, in parallel with the growth and expansion of the economies of developing countries in recent years, the South-East Asian region had experienced an average growth of 5.5 per cent during the previous year. Foreign direct investment flows had reached $38 billion over the same period, and a positive trade performance to the tune of $646 billion in value. However, such growth rates were not strong enough to support the efforts of governments in achieving the Millennium Development Goals, and especially their poverty reduction targets. Rising oil prices and the uncertainties surrounding the Doha negotiations could worsen the situation.

66. From that perspective, it was all the more important to implement a global partnership for development, harnessing the momentum created by the adoption of the United Nations resolution on the follow-up to the outcome of the 2005 World Summit. Measures undertaken in that regard should include the adoption of fair trade policies responding to the needs of the developing countries, building the capacity of developing countries in international trade, increased development financing, and the achievement of balance between national policy space and international commitments.

67. The ASEAN community shared the desire to promote regional cooperation in exploring its

development options in an integrated, seamless market, serving as an international production base by 2015. Steady progress had been made to implement the 2004 Vientiane Action Programme, which, inter alia, aimed at bridging the development gap among its members. ASEAN was also contributing to regional growth within the context of the Jakarta Declaration on Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific: The Way Forward 2015, and was committed to producing tangible results through enhanced South-South cooperation and tripartite agreements with development partners.

68. **Mr. Nguyen Tat Thanh** (Viet Nam) said that the suspension of the Doha Round had been disappointing, and developing countries should continue to adjust to the dominant system by integrating into the regional and world economy. However trade-distorting mechanisms, export subsidies, domestic support and obstacles, which made developing country exports artificially less competitive, would continue to give richer countries a disproportionate advantage. In spite of the recognition that increased capital flows and financing for development were crucial in enabling developing countries to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, ODA remained below the agreed target levels. With regard to international commitments on financing for development, it was important to move forward with urgency. His delegation welcomed efforts to explore innovative sources of financing, including those recommended by the Technical Group on Innovative Financing Mechanisms, and appreciated the commitment of development partners, such as the European Union, that had fulfilled their ODA obligations.

69. In addition to ODA, debt relief and trade could help low- and middle-income countries to make effective use of their resources to accelerate the achievement of their Goals. In that connection, he called for the immediate implementation of the G-8 agreement on debt cancellation for eligible Heavily Indebted Poor Countries.

70. The Committee played a major role in placing development at the centre of the United Nations agenda. Viet Nam supported the restructuring and revitalization of the Organization, and the adoption of initiatives aimed at strengthening its links with other multinational, financial, trade and development institutions. Viet Nam had made every effort to integrate into the international economy, and to broaden cooperation with international organizations and other countries. As an ASEAN member, it was proactively working towards the conclusion or full implementation of free trade agreements with its partners, the promotion of South-South cooperation, including NEPAD, and the enhancement of economic partnerships with the industrialized countries. He was also pleased that all the bilateral negotiations concerning Viet Nam's accession to the World Trade Organization would be completed by the end of 2006. In November, his country would host the Summit for Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). In conclusion, he reaffirmed his Government's commitment to the attainment of the internationally agreed goals, and its readiness to cooperate with the international community in the achievement of the shared vision of a better world.

71. **Mr. Blas** (Philippines) referred to resolution 60/187 entitled "External debt crisis and development", which took note of the discussions and assessment by the Paris Club of his delegation's proposal for "Debt for Equity in Millennium Development Goal Projects". That initiative would offer the international community an alternative mechanism for solving the debt problem of developing countries, particularly middle-income countries, and complemented the G-8 agreement to write off the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries' multilateral debt. It would give creditors the option of ploughing back into the economies of debtor countries 50 per cent of an agreed portion of debt-service payments in the form of equities to be channelled into suitable projects. He called on Member States, both rich and poor, to support it.

72. He also referred to the General Assembly's High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, held a few days previously. His country was committed to developing international cooperation to protect the rights of all migrant workers; combat trafficking in persons; build partnerships for the balanced and comprehensive management of migration to benefit receiving and sending countries alike; reduce the cost of transferring migrants' remittances; and minimize the negative impacts of migration. To that end, it strongly supported the establishment of a global consultative forum to sustain the momentum created by the High-level Dialogue.

73. He concluded with an appeal to the international community to help his country with its clean-up drive

following an ecological disaster in southern Philippines, where an oil spill had imperilled marine life and created health hazards for the local people.

74. **Ms. Blum** (Colombia) said that one of the greatest challenges for the Latin American and Caribbean region was to reduce the level of inequity, as had been shown by the report "The Millennium Development Goals: a Latin American and Caribbean Perspective", prepared under the coordination of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. The issue of sustainable development, with its three pillars of sustainable economic growth, social development and environmental protection, was particularly important in that context; although it was the primary responsibility of each country its success or failure depended essentially on external factors. And yet despite two decades of efforts, developing countries had not been able to achieve sustainability; that highlighted the importance of meeting ODA goals, and focusing special attention on the needs of middle-income countries.

75. Her delegation supported the holding of a follow-up conference to the Monterrey Consensus, which would offer an opportunity to reform the international financial system. Colombia had improved its oversight of banks and financial institutions and hoped that other countries, particularly the developed countries, were making similar efforts. It shared the general disappointment at the suspension of the Doha Round of negotiations, which could, however, be brought to a successful conclusion if greater flexibility were shown by countries that offered export subsidies and various forms of domestic assistance.

76. As a member of the Cairns Group, Colombia was prepared to take steps to ensure the success of the Doha Round, particularly with regard to market access. She expressed satisfaction at the recent High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, which had brought to the fore one of the most important aspects of globalization, namely, the international mobility of labour. The United Nations constituted the most appropriate framework for continuing debate on that issue, with all due regard for the rights of migrants and their contribution to the economies of both sending and receiving countries. On the issue of natural disasters, Colombia supported the Hyogo Declaration and Framework for Action, with a view to improving the early warning process. Strongly committed to natural disaster prevention, it had adopted a "Forest-keeper Families Programme" aimed at combating the cutting down of tropical forest and the growing of illicit crops.

77. Her delegation recognized the need for steps to ensure the full efficiency of the Organization's action on the ground, in accordance with the principles laid down in General Assembly resolution 59/250, and to strengthen its capacity to respond flexibly to the needs of the countries concerned, in particular by making the financing of operational activities for development more dependent on core resources. Less predictable resources should be used only in complementary ways.

78. **Mr. Yousfi** (Algeria) said that, in the absence of a global and long-term approach predicated on the principle of solidarity, developing countries' efforts to achieve development would continue to be impeded by structural factors. He stressed the need for institutional frameworks in which to carry out effective and democratic concerted action. International institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization had a decisive role to play by remedying the shortcomings of asymmetrical globalization and, in consultation with the countries of the South, implementing development policies adapted to their needs. The process to reform those institutions, launched in Singapore, should enable those needs to be more fully taken into account.

79. He welcomed the bilateral and multilateral initiatives taken by developed country partners to ease the debt burden of the least developed countries and combat the endemic diseases affecting them but called for continuing and greater solidarity to that end. Special emphasis should be placed on development financing and on responding to the concerns of the most vulnerable countries in trade negotiations.

80. His country had been pleased to participate in the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, which had allowed it to reaffirm the importance of a coherent and balanced, comprehensive and holistic approach to the issue and to stress the need to respect the rights of migrants through a strengthening of the system of international standards governing migratory flows. Migrants would thus be able to contribute to international cohesion and stability and to the creation of wealth for the benefit of all.

81. If the United Nations were to remain the most appropriate framework for the formulation of

international economic and social development policies, every effort must be made to strengthen its multilateral character and enable it to continue serving development. The projected reform of the Economic and Social Council should be aimed at confirming the Council's central role in the coordination of economic and social development and providing it with the resources required to discharge its mandate. In the same vein, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and other flagships of multilateralism that were able to draw on substantial expertise in the development field should continue to be given support.

82. Turning to the subject of natural disasters, he said that in view of their increased frequency and the heavy toll they took in human lives and material damage, development plans should have a global and long-term perspective. He concluded by calling for collective action to combat environmental degradation, which required joint efforts by developed and developing countries through true international cooperation, the provision of sufficient financial resources for capacity-building and the establishment of effective mechanisms for environment-friendly technology transfer.

83. **Mr. Badji** (Senegal) said that, in the previous year, notable progress had been made towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. In particular, the multilateral debt of 18 of the least developed countries, including Senegal, had been wiped out; an air travel tax had been introduced; and the "Millennium Villages" initiative had been launched. A great deal remained to be done, however, especially in Africa, where development efforts could not succeed without viable and continuing measures to address the root causes of its economic inertia; such had been the rationale behind the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) initiative, adopted in 2002. While recognizing that Africa bore the primary responsibility for its own development, he stressed that the international community had not honoured its commitments to support that initiative. He called for greater efforts to ensure a fair international trade system and to redress the imbalances of globalization, noting that the poorest countries had become more fragile than ever before because of exogenous factors such as unstable world commodity prices and natural disasters. In that context, the suspension of the Doha Round and skyrocketing world oil prices were matters of grave concern for Africa and for Senegal in particular, where the increase in the oil bill had seriously jeopardized a number of important social advances. The recent establishment of the Association of Non-Oil-Producing African Countries (PANPP) was an effort to address that problem. In addition, and as a matter of urgency, the commitments made at the 2005 World Summit had to be translated into reality, in particular by untying ODA and reforming the United Nations system.

84. He welcomed the emphasis placed by the recent High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development on the principles of shared responsibility, mutual interest and co-development. The President of Senegal, for his part, had proposed the holding of a conference of African intellectuals of the diaspora, to discuss, in particular, the huge possibilities for Africa's development that could be offered by its expatriate population.

85. By implementing its Poverty Reduction Strategy and improving its business climate, Senegal had overcome many challenges to achieve an average economic growth rate of 5 per cent over the previous five years. To build on its achievements, it was engaging in an effort of accelerated growth for the period 2006-2015, with a view to attaining a growth rate of at least 7 per cent while remaining committed to the promotion of education and health care, the advancement of women and the fight against infectious diseases.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.